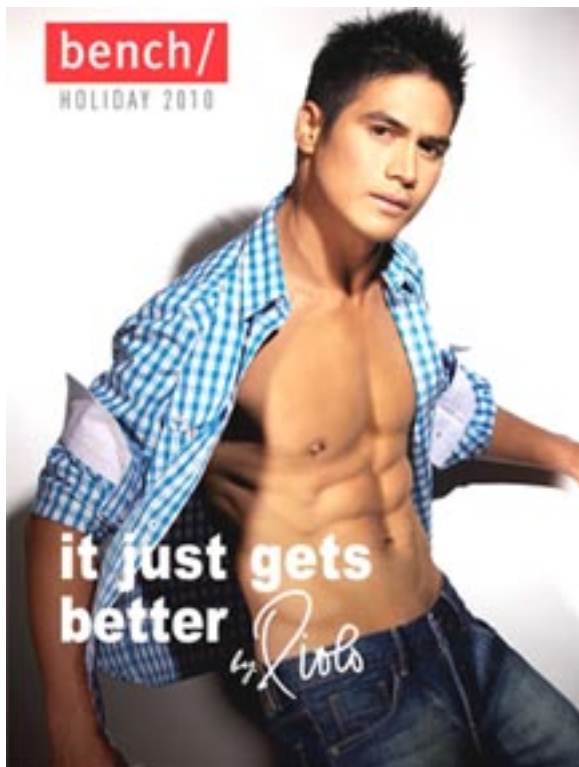


'Filipino men most vain in Asia'

Written by James Cordova
Friday, 29 April 2011 19:49



Piolo Pascual for Bench.

Selling mirrors must be a robust business in the Philippines.

That is because Filipinos are supposed to be the most vain, the most narcissistic men in Asia.

A 2006 survey by a company called Synovate was recently cited by CNN in a story about the "most sinful cities" in Asia.

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The story ranks the cities according to the “seven deadly sins” and Manila is right there as the city that is the most proud of them all.

Much is made about the loveliness of the Filipino female.

But you wouldn't know it by talking to the Filipino men — they're too busy gazing lustfully into the mirror.

According to a study from Synovate, Filipino men are the most narcissistic in Asia.

A whopping 48 percent consider themselves sexually attractive.

And if the ladies reading this think the guys' encounters with the brow tweezers are for your benefit, sorry — nine out of 10 Filipino men polled said they liked to look good for themselves, not anyone else.

By way of comparison, just 25 percent of men in Singapore considered themselves sexually attractive, 17 percent in China and Taiwan and a measly 12 percent of Hong Kong guys think the same.

The Synovate survey notes that “the findings have a wide-ranging implication for the marketers of personal grooming products.”

Traditionally, it says, “marketers have addressed this market by selling to wives, mothers, sisters, girlfriends. Now, they can go directly to the newly minted beautiful male.”

It's not difficult to substantiate the survey's claim.

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If you have a Filipino male friend, take a peek into his backpack or bathroom cabinet and you will invariably find all sorts of personal hygiene, even beauty, products: toothbrush, toothpaste, perhaps even a mouthwash, an underarm roll or spray, a cologne or perfume, an aftershave perhaps, a comb, a pair of nail cutters, hair gel...If you're lucky you can probably even find a compact mirror.

Filipino men are just as finicky about their looks as the women.

The "metrosexual" phenomenon has recently caught on in urban centers.

Products that used to be marketed only to women are now also being peddled to men, such as Nivea for Men.

On its Facebook page for the Philippines, Nivea tells Filipino men: "Hey BROs, how's the summer vacation preps so far? But first, make sure your skin has the freedom to enjoy under the sun by getting the right sunblock based on your skin tone, skin type, target location and date!"

One fan remarked: "I love this stuff — The best way to look good and smell good:) Honestly Nivea team — Thumbs up;)"

The "narcissistic Filipino," in fact, is now part of popular culture.

Movie posters and billboards always feature men in various stages of undress, usually to display washboard abs.

One movie star, Piolo Pascual, has made a career out of these advertising endorsements apparently with the stipulation that all of his posters should show his midsection — even if what

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he endorses has absolutely nothing to do with those abs, like a condominium.

Looking at these posters and billboards, you'd think that Filipino men are the healthiest, fittest men on earth.

In truth, obesity is rising in the Philippines.

Cases of diabetes and other so-called lifestyle diseases, such as hypertension, are on the rise.

This, of course, has not stopped and should not stop Filipinos from adoring themselves in the mirror.

If only we could do it less so we can actually get some things done in this country.